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COMIX PLUGOLA

RAW V. 2, #3 is out from Penguin Books so get a copy at your local bookstore and read the latest stories of folks like Art Spiegelman, Joost Swarte, Justin Green, Gary Panter, Krystine Krittre, Alan Moore, et al. If you can't get RAW where you are, you can order a copy by mail from Catalan Communications, 43 Ea 19th, NYC, NY 10003. $16.95 pp. This issue contains an early Krazy Kat story by Herriman.

Look around for **THE WORLD OF WARD 1.** Great reprints of the ultra-sex art of Bill Ward as well as a collection of the pin-up art of Jack Cole. Women never existed the way Bill Ward drew them, but then if they had he would not have had to have drawn them that way, would he? Imagine Bugs Bunny saying this line.

Harvey has revived **TOM AND JERRY** and the good news about this is the reprints of the Barks' Barney Bear and Benny Burro stories contained therein. Barney was an old fave of mine. He started out in **OUR GANG** before it became the early **TOM AND JERRY**. In the forties a lot of animators made some extra bucks moonlighting for comic companies. They drew comic book versions of their screen cartoons and as many other stories as they could come up with. I was always amazed at how prolific these guys were. After inbetweening all day at one of the studios, they went home to the drawing board at night!

The Lite Rail Gallery, 918 12th Street, in Sacramento, California, will host a retrospective of the Art of Guy Colwell. Guy is the creator of **The Inner-City Romance Comic** and his recent **DOLL** series was a hit from Rip Off Press. The show runs from June 8 through July 8, 1991, so stop in and check out Guy's paintings if you're up that way.

Get thee to a library and read therein.
Would'st be a breeder of illiterate clods?

The Gulf War has laid to rest, for once and always, the romantic notion that Bay Area alternative print in the 1990s might function as did the so-called "Underground Press" during a previous war. Back then, rags like the *Barb* (and later, the *Tribe*) and the *Express* (later the *Good Times*) were born in crisis and tempered in struggle, subterranean instruments of response that so challenged the State the FBI was summoned to run a serious COINTELPRO operation on them (see Geoffrey Rips' *UnAmerican Activities*). These sloppy sexist, poorly-edited sheets incited an urgency that today's "alternative" establishment press cannot afford. But then, Max Scherr probably did not wait for the futon shoppe lines to come in before launching the *Barb* on Vietnam Day 1985 and when the Good Times Collective went daily during the Cambodian Spring, it was the necessity of the moment that dedicated how much news could be fit to print, not the Whole Earth Access display.

John Ross
The Fire Next Time
Anderson Valley Advertiser
April 17, 1991, p. 7.

BY CLAY GEERDES

THE SLEEPY LITTLE ENGINE. A children's story to be read to kids with trains on the brain.
$2.50 pp.

ESSAYS: VOLUME ONE. A group of essays about my early life for those readers who have always wondered who the hell Clay Geerdes is and what he is really like.
$3.50 pp.

ESSAYS: VOLUME TWO. More general essays, a couple of which have appeared in **COMIX WAVE** or elsewhere.
$3.50 pp.

Check out **THE HERMIT OF 69TH STREET,** the last book from Jerzy Kosinski. He killed himself last month. The hermit is himself and the book is an intellectual diary. Kosinski was a holocaust survivor and he told his story in his first novel, **THE PAINTED BIRD.** My favorite is **COCKPIT,** but most of you probably know of Kosinski from the Peter Sellers' movie **BEING THERE.** No, I don't know the details of JK's suicide. I know he was involved in a plagiarism suit not long back, but this is the fate of most novelists. Hey, it's the subject of Judith Rossner's latest **HIS LITTLE WOMEN.** And if you haven't read either Kosinski or Rossner, go out and read all of their books and let me know what you think. -c.g.

EL VIBORA 135 and 136 are $9 each from J. M. Berengueuer, Plaza Beatas 3, Barcelona, Spain. The ultimate in Spanish sex art.

What every editor wants--and every reader, for that matter--can be summed up in four paradoxical words: *the same only different.* Your story must be the same as innumerable other stories so that it may provide a similar kind of satisfaction to the reader. Yet it must simultaneously differ sufficiently from all of those other stories so that the reader will not feel it's something he's read over and over in the past.

Lawrence Block
TELLING LIES FOR FUN AND PROFIT, 1981

Remember to include an age statement when you order any underground or sex comix. I know most of you guys get your moms to buy them for you, but...

A television network on assignment to a war imagines itself outfitted with the trappings of immortality.

Lewis Lapham
Harper's, May, 1991.

Randy Reynaldo has the first issue of ROB HANES out. Rob reminds me a lot of Jack Armstrong. If you liked the adventure strips in the papers and still prefer a certain amount of naiveté in your comics, you'll probably enjoy this one. $3.25 pp by mail from Brave New Words, POB 20421, Providence, RI 02920. Standard B/W comic with color cover. Nice artwork.

Get a $3.00 copy of **PUSH-BUTTON CONTROLLER** from Ben Gordon at 123 Saratoga Road, Box 128, Glenville, NY 12302. Ben has a nice writing style, a voice you can year. This issue contains a biographical article with a lot of humorous anecdotes therein. 64 pp, 8 1/2 x 11.

The seventh part of the **Melmoth** story is featured in **CEREBUS 146** now on sale at your local comic emporium.

Harrington's political cartoon art radiates life's 'true observations'

y Pat Fry

DETROIT

Detroit showered a celebrity welcome on life-long politi- l cartoonist Ollie Harrington, . who kicked off an extraordi- ry week of lectures, work- ops and the opening of his ret- spective exhibit at the Museum African-American History.

Sponsored by several frican-American media organi- tions, Detroit's three major ewspapers and the *People's eekly World*, it was his first sit to the U.S. in 20 years.

Harrington is renowned for s satirical cartoons, "Bootsie" d "Little Luther," vehicles for nging commentary on racism d an array of social issues in .S. during the 1930s to s. His work appeared in the *ourgh Courier, Amsterdam ews, Baltimore Sun*, and the

Pat Fry

Ollie Harrington

Daily Worker and its successors through to the *People's Weekly World*.

Harrington recalled for a packed crowd his artistic beginnings as a student at Public School 35 in the South Bronx, N.Y. Harrington and a classmate were the only Black students at the school.

"Very often our teacher, Miss McCoy, used to call us up to the front of the room and say, 'They belong in the trash basket.'" said Harrington. "I couldn't do anything to defend myself, so I began doing drawings of Miss McCoy, and I might say they were drawings Miss McCoy would not consider pieces of art."

After graduation, his drawings focused on a local police officer who enjoyed finding ways of whipping Black youngsters with his club. Harrington said, "There was nothing we could do about it so I all I could do was to include Officer Duggan in my gallery of drawings."

The Bootsie cartoon was created against the backdrop of the 1930s Harlem Renaissance, an explosive period of African-American cultural expression in music, art, poetry, and literature. Bootsie depicted the Jim Crow segregation in Harlem, flaunted at places like Frank's Restaurant and the Cotton Club. While gangsters like Dutch Shultz frequented such places, Black people were barred as patrons, said Harrington.

Harrington's graduate studies in fine arts at Yale were interrupted by World War II. Harrington served as a correspondent in Europe. Harrington recalled the post-war campaign of violence against Black veterans in the south.

Because of segregation in the army, he explained, Blacks could not spend money easily; clubs were for "whites only." So with cash in hand upon their return to the U.S., Black veterans began to buy up little plots of farm land.

"Well, they had no way of thinking this out, but this was considered one of the greatest threats to 'democracy' in the south," said Harrington. "Great waves of lynchings took place."

Harrington was urged to accept the post of head of public relations for the NAACP. Fearing he would be taken away from his artistic work, Harrington resisted until the savage beating of Black veteran Isaac Woodard.

Woodard, a young vet returning home from the Pacific through the Jim Crow south, was dragged off a bus in South Carolina and beaten by two policemen who gouged out both his eyes. Choking back tears, Harrington said, "Well, this was a little too much for me. So, I accepted the offer at the NAACP and went in to organize the public relations department."

The Woodard beating and the search for his attackers became a national case for the NAACP, said Harrington. There were no known assailants, no hospital records and Woodard was unable to say exactly where he was when the beating took place.

"That's right, as Reagan says, I'm here by choice. So please deliver it to my mansion down the street and I'll have my chauffeur here pick it up later."

Launching a spectacular publicity campaign, Harrington solicited the help of Orson Welles. Welles did a series of weekly broadcasts on Woodard's case in an effort to track down the assailants. After six months, they were found in South Carolina, brought to trial and then acquitted. For his part in the effort, Welles was fired by CBS, blacklisted by the film industry and forced into exile in Europe. Harrington would soon follow.

Similar cases were championed by the NAACP that won some important successes, said Harrington. "Eventually, what I was doing at the NAACP came to the attention of Tom Clark, the attorney general. Clark named me as a Communist."

"If it could have been proved that an executive of the NAACP was a Communist, that was all they wanted. The idea was to drive Black organizations into the patriotic frenzy, and I would have no part of this," said Harrington. "If I stayed and had been brought up on charges which were in the making, they would have been able to attack the NAACP."

Friends advised him to "take a little trip to Europe, a little vacation until it blew over." Harrington left in 1951 with his close friend, novelist Richard Wright. "It turned out to be a vacation of 40 years," he said.

Throughout his years in Europe, Harrington continued his Bootsie cartoons until 1963 when the *Chicago Defender* was forced to suspend him under "certain pressures," he said. In 1961, Harrington left Paris for East Berlin. There he started a new line of cartoons in color, published in the German Democratic Republic's top satirical magazine, *Eulenspiegel*.

Harrington said the German reunification "has left a very strange atmosphere there. People in the east have destroyed something," he said. "There was good reason for demanding change and reform but you have to have plans on what's going to happen after you throw out the government.

"We had no such plans, so all the people in the east have become second-class citizens. All of the social benefits which were very, very extensive have been eliminated. Unemployment has reached 50 percent and I would say there is a very, very dangerous situation developing there." Despite the difficulties, Harrington will return "because I have a family there."

Harrington's exhibit at the Museum of African-American History runs through June. The cartoons displayed are based on actual experiences of his life and "true observations," he said. "There's not a lie in the whole exhibit."

The suits, politicians, and bureaucrats are more the Enemy in a real war on drugs, than any drug dealer who ever lived. It is their mistakes, false promises, and ineptitude that keep us on a path to more useless death and destruction. They--like the generals and the politicians of Viet Nam--don't gamble with their own lives; they risk those of others. Their primary concerns are public image, their individual careers, and the funding of their election campaigns, and bureaucracies. They are the ones who most fear the words of the frontline soldier.

–Michael Levine
DEEP COVER, 1990.